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ABSTRACT

The document presents two papers related to philosophy instruction at the high school level. The first paper suggests how to motivate beginning philosophy students by injecting a sense of reality and relevance into class discussions. One recommendation for furthering this sense of reality is to ask questions of current interest such as whether there is justification for the existing high school curriculum. Another way to foster interest is to involve students in shared inquiry of philosophic writing, such as Plato's "Meno" or Socrates' "Lysis." The general tactic recommended for teachers to use is class discussion centered on modern phrasing of basic ideas expressed in the dialogues. For example, students will learn about Platonic insights as they discuss statements in the "Meno" that no one can teach values to another person and that students can only learn when they are motivated. The second paper suggests principles, theories, and learning activities for use by classroom teachers as they develop introductory philosophy courses. A summary of "The Republic" is presented and topics are identified which are of contemporary as well as classical interest. These include justice, self interest, extrinsic and intrinsic good, equal opportunity for women, uses of war, standards of virtue, and immortality of the soul. Students are involved in written and oral analyses of classical and modern social situations, examining Plato's ethical concepts in terms of modern ethical beliefs, and creating pictorial representations of Plato's images. (Author/DB)

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Plato's "Meno" as Form and as Content of Secondary School Courses in Philosophy. An Occassional Paper [And] Plato's "Republic": A Study Guide.

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PLATO'S MENO AS FORM AND AS CONTENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL COURSES IN PHILOSOPHY.

An Occasional Paper

Perhaps, when Booth Tarkington wrote Seventeen, it would have been inappropriate to burden high school students with philosophy. His 17-year-old hero, Willie Baxter, had less grip on reality, and fewer ideas about civil disobedience or government responsibility, than my daughter Joanna had attained by the age of ten. But the current cultural scene no longer permits the cushioned extended infancy of Tarkington's day. Our high school students are faced by philosophical questions; and the issue is, therefore, not "whether they will philosophize," but "how well."

One such question, urgently asked, is: "Is there justification for the education our high-schools are offering?" Is the enterprise intended to increase the earning power of its products? To offer tools for effective citizenship? To contribute, somehow, to the happiness and excellence of its students? And is it realizing its intention? For example, should "values" be taught? If so, whose values? Is the school system actually doing a good educational job? What criteria would be useful in judging this?

At some point relatively early in a secondary school encounter with philosophy, it seems to me that--given certain conditions--raising these very questions can inject a sense of reality into the discussion. The "certain conditions" are those that make philosophy possible as shared inquiry. It may be that, at a later stage, philosophy as an ordered discipline can engage our students' attention and admiration. But it can't do this until there is some motivation to admire it, some sense of wonder, and some sense of concrete relevance.

Recently, when I was fielding questions after a lecture on ancient Greek philosophy to a group of high-school students, it occurred to me that an excellent piece of reading for secondary school philosophers would be Plato's Meno, provided the dialogue were rescued from philosophers and given what I take to be its intended moral and interpretation. "The" moral in fact is multiple. In the first place, the argument seems to show that "values" (or "virtues") cannot be taught either by instruction or example. (In fact, it suggests, correctly, that nothing can be taught unless the student wants to learn it.) But in the second place, the dialogue shows that virtue can be taught by the shared inquiry of the Socratic method, if that sharing is real. For, as I will show, Meno becomes better through his talk with Socrates. The fact that (as we, and Plato's earlier readers, know from history) Meno goes on to cowardice, treachery, and to his execution is not the result of an incorrigibly wicked nature, but rather the result of a bad education.

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In connection with this second moral, it is worth pointing out that today, we tend to reject theories of hereditary vice--though there are some defenders of the view that ignorance is hereditary--and find ourselves left with the awkward question of how we can account for the differences between "good" people and "bad." I would myself prefer to open this discussion with the Meno as case study, since an inexperienced group will wander off into a

fog of vagueness if we ask them to attack in their full generality the questions involved in the issue of education for human betterment.

With this in mind, I want to turn to the notion of the Platonic dialogue as a model for doing introductory philosophy, a model which manages to combine discipline with engagement through its interaction of argument with dramatic form. This is a prologue to a new analysis of the Meno as Platonic dialogue. For unless I establish my own optimistic way of seeing this imagined encounter between Meno and Socrates, I will be starting my students out confronting a proof that education and human excellence are totally irrelevant. And from that, it would follow that the schools are perpetrating a fraud in claiming to make anyone "better." (In a recent legal case where a graduate sued an Eastern university because it had not carried out its promise to make him "a liberally educated man," my sympathies are obviously with the plaintiff, though he was laughed out of court.)

When I spoke of "rescuing the dialogue from scholars," this may have seemed to advocate a kidnapping rather than a true rescue. What I had in mind was reading this dialogue as a philosophic drama, in which the reader can identify himself or herself with Meno--and perhaps with Gorgias, Anytus, and Socrates as well. What I do not have in mind is reading this as though it were merely a didactic lecture, a scholarly curiosity, or, at the other extreme, an item of mindless literary entertainment. Every detail of the text, every nuance in the exchange of compliments or criticisms, is important. And these require the best efforts of the scholar. The ideal situation would be to have a new edition of the Meno annotated by scholars and specifically designed for secondary school teachers and their students.

First, I will try to define philosophy written in the Platonic dialogue form, with an analysis of the Meno as type specimen. After that I will turn to the implications of the analysis for pedagogical theory, and the suitability of this dialogue as reading matter for relatively new students of philosophy. Some of you will recognize some definitions and analyses as material I have defended on other occasions. I do not intend this partial repetition to imply that I endorse Lewis Carroll's Bellman Definition of Truth, that "What I tell you three times is true..." I would, though, assert the converse, that "Some of what is true is what I tell you three times."

In general, scholars dealing with Platonic dialogues show a remarkable talent for saying one thing and doing another. Everyone says that Plato intends to bring together in a new unity a dramatic form and a pattern of philosophical investigation. But having said that, almost everyone sets aside the "literary ornament" in order to concentrate on something called the "philosophical argument." This amounts to imposing a radically non-Platonic conception of philosophy on Plato, and of mis-reading even the "argument" dimension, since the action offers relevant premises as well. There are exceptions to this schizoid approach, but not enough.

Aristotle, in his Poetics, gives a brief account of the experiments of tragic poets looking for the "proper form" of tragedy, until it finally was stabilized with Sophocles. The same sort of history of a search for

the right literary form can be written for Greek philosophy. The philosophers before Plato were experimenting with forms of communication which they hoped would be suitable to express new ideas. The list of forms they tried runs from diagram through epigram, epic and lyric, dry almanac and live conversation. The experimenters include Heraclitus, with a cryptic Oracular style; Parmenides, with a logical proof set in the frame of a philosophic journey; Empedocles, with his cosmological poetry and sharp detailed imagery; Hippias the Sophist, claiming the reference work as his invention; finally, Socrates, with engaged shared inquiry as his chosen tool. It would require a great deal of time and of aesthetic sensitivity, to do justice to the directions and limits which each of these choices of form set to the development of philosophical ideas. For my present purpose, however, I can jump to the end of the story, to the stabilization of the literary form of philosophy into two families, Platonic and Aristotelian.

The Platonic form of philosophic writing derives from the tradition of Greek drama and epic, conversation and debate. It is, in its initial form, an attempt to bring the reader into a shared inquiry by including him in a Socratic conversation which is carefully left incomplete. In the background here is the Socratic idea of philosophy as engaged adventure, with debate, search, interaction of characters, changes of fortune.

The Aristotelian form of philosophic writing (and philosophic lecturing) derives rather from the tradition of science, medicine, and mathematics than from the epic and dramatic literary tradition. It expresses itself in long, coherent treatises by an impersonal, omniscient author; it aims at order, scope, and objectivity. The idiosyncracies of the character of the lecturer, the behavior of his particular audiences, the excitement of risk in shared inquiry, are not relevant in this form, and are eliminated so far as possible.

This second form can be conveniently labelled the "treatise" as distinguished from the "dialogue." Now, the treatise has certain merits that the dramatic dialogue does not. It permits literal statements, universal in the sense that they hold for any audience or individual. It permits a special sort of objective precision in testing the validity and coherence of philosophic propositions. But it does these things by assuming that it is humanly possible and philosophically desirable to ascend to those heights of pure mind, disengaged from the eccentricities, individualities, and adventures of the concrete world we live in. A sign of this may be that the ad hominem form of argument seems a fallacy to the typical Aristotelian, while for the Platonist, it is one of his most effective dialectical tools.

I must confess that I am a Platonist, who sees no virtue in pretending that philosophic arguments can exist in a vacuum. Not even mathematics can quite do that, as Whitehead, one of the great modern mathematicians, indicated when he ended his lecture on "Immortality" by saying of mathematics that "The exactness is a fake." I will, if I must choose, take relevance and vividness at the price of thin exactness.

Since my sympathies lie with the dialogue as proper philosophic form, but since it is a form often misunderstood, I will offer two case studies

to show the interaction of drama and discussion that typify this form. I will look at one early Socratic dialogue, the Lysis; then at the Meno.

The Lysis is a dialogue whose cast consists of Socrates, two young boys (about eleven years old), and two older boys (about eighteen). The theme is friendship: what are friends?, and how are friends made? Two parts of the author's purpose are easily seen: Plato is defending Socrates against the charge of being a bad influence on the young, and he is trying to carry on the Socratic "mission of inquiry." Of the four boys in the cast, each pair of the same age contrasts in temperment between one who is aggressive (Ctesippus, Menexenus) and one who is gentle (Hippothales, Lysis). Hippothales would very much like to be loved by Lysis, but Lysis dislikes him. Socrates, offering a demonstration of the way to talk to people in order to make them friendly, directs the talk to this very topic: the causes and definition of friendship. Several common sense notions are tried out: among them, the Sophist idea that friendship is only a kind of utilitarian pursuit of advantage. Reader's of Dale Carnegie's modern directions for winning friends and influencing people will recognize this idea in a modern incarnation. But the young men are not satisfied with this notion. Socrates suggests that perhaps love and hate are cosmic forces, and that we like and dislike other persons by a kind of law of nature. That notion had already been suggested by some cosmologists: it is tempting, because if it were true, we might build a science of philology geared to love of persons rather than of language. Recent popular science experimenting with blind dating arranged by computer is a vague echo of this idea. And if our likes and dislikes are "by nature" and "lawlike" we can see this explanation of behavior leading off to social science more generally. This view is--rather too quickly--set aside, and it is not clear how far the rejection is a result of idealism, how far of existentialism. But the whole group of characters have by now become such close friends, that the boys' tutors have to break up the party by force.

Clearly, in the Lysis, Socrates has been a good educational influence. Equally clearly, he has left his readers with a puzzle: as far as the argument of this inquiry goes, there is no way in which we can win friends, since, in fact, we don't even know what it is we are trying to win. Yet, so far as the development of the drama goes, we have seen Socrates using shared inquiry as a technique for making participants friends. Very well, but the reader with a logical mind remains annoyed that the scientific, "cosmological" accounts of friendship as natural affinity are not explored. (They are transmuted into ethical affinities instead.) But this reader should notice that in the cast, we have characters who are like and unlike in respect to age, temperament, and wisdom; that in the beginning, the pattern of their attitudes rules out the possibility that any simple "like to like" or "opposites attract" natural law governs friendship; yet that, at the end, old and young, quiet and aggressive, have all become friends through the catalytic effect of Socrates.

We see the relevance of cast and character to argument even more clearly in the Meno. Meno, rushing up to Socrates, presumably with his stylus and tablet at the ready, opens the conversation with his demand: "Let me have the word, Socrates. Can virtue be taught by precept, or by example, or is it a natural gift?" Socrates does not know but is willing

to inquire. We learn immediately after his opening question that Meno has been a student of the Sophist, Gorgias, a master of "teaching by precept;" if indeed "Sophistication" can make men better, Meno should be an ideal example to offer in proof.

Later in the dialogue, we will encounter Anytus, the Athenian statesman who was later to engineer the execution of Socrates; he appears as spokesman for the view that virtue is taught "by example."

After Socrates has refused to offer a didactic answer to Meno's question, it takes constant persuasion by Socrates to get Meno to go on with the investigation. Meno, presently, explains that he thinks Socrates is the worst teacher he has ever seen! When Socrates has led a Slave Boy to see a geometrical proof by way of asking him questions, Meno readily agrees that Socrates has "taught him nothing." But even if Socrates had been a teacher of geometry, this would not help decide the case for the teachability of virtue. When Socrates, Meno, and Anytus cannot find any teachers of virtue, they conclude, reluctantly, that virtue cannot be knowledge, since if it were, it could be taught. And if anyone could teach it, he, being virtuous, would teach it. Meno becomes a better and better respondent, more interested in the argument, throughout the second part of the dialogue; but he ends up puzzled by its negative conclusion. So does the reader; particularly the reader who has picked up Plato's plot, since Meno himself becomes more virtuous as the dialogue goes on. There is, then, at least one person who can teach virtue, Socrates; his teaching, however, is neither by didactic precept nor by example, but by shared inquiry. Since this falls outside the disjunctive notion Meno holds about possible kinds of "teaching," it remains true for his sense of the term that virtue can't be "taught." The correct reading of the dialogue gives a result that is much more constructive, optimistic, and a better defense of Socrates than commentators have usually seen. But the result depends on taking argument and action together, and noticing how Meno changes. Even the best commentators--Klein, Sternfeld and Zyskind, Bluck--miss the full impact of this dramatic development. Unfortunately for us all, one encounter with Socratic teaching is not enough, by itself, to effect a permanent improvement in character; and Meno, for all his talent and his Socratic dialogue, leaves Athens continuing a star-crossed career. (One reason why Plato may have chosen him is that this career has been described so bitterly by Xenophon in the Anabasis. If indeed Vice were a matter of "nature," so that some men were incorrigible, Meno would have been Xenophon's prize candidate as an example!)

The dialogue form, as we go from the Lysis to the Meno, becomes more extended; not only are questions posed, but alternatives are marked out and explored in greater length. Thus, the dialogues of this second group, still "inconclusive," are more nearly "complete;" they end just after, rather than just before, what would be the "middle" of an Aristotelean structured argument. Myth and mathematics play important auxiliary roles; probably because Plato has been to Italy and Sicily. The author's intention also seems to change: we are being shown, now, that Socrates was not "just another Sophist," as Aristophanes and the Athenian public had thought. In a confrontation of life-styles, each with an incarnation in its spokesman, Plato plots collisions of Socrates and the relativistic teachers of success: Gorgias (and later the latter's student, Meno); Protagoras; Prodicus;

Hippias; the "strong man" Callicles. There is also a confrontation of models of "knowledge:" Socrates defends "insight into form" against a "storage and retrieval of information" idea. Plato's world of forms includes objective value forms, and so is in exact opposition to the Sophistic reduction of values to arbitrary artifacts, established by convention. Yet, as we have seen, the questions raised in these Socratic dialogues still go unanswered in the abstract argument, however clearly the drama itself offers a commentary and suggests a resolution.

I would like to analyze the changes in Meno's character in more detail. The reason is that the idea that there is a development of character other than a simple realization of ignorance has not been generally accepted. Even where it is tangentially recognized, the recognition is not accompanied by the further insight that such a development exactly reverses the ostensibly pessimistic conclusion of the dialogue. So I will trace the asides and attitudes that Plato introduces to underscore the changes in character as his plot proceeds.

Meno's initial attitude is one of impetuousness (70A), and unwillingness to share an inquiry (at 75B, he tells Socrates to answer his question for himself). There is also a criticism of Meno for his laziness and lack of temperance (75C; compare 76A, where Meno is shameless, lazy, and tyrannical, though beautiful). When, by 78D, Meno manages to define virtue in terms of wealth (this is an error in wisdom, temperance, and justice all at once), Socrates addresses him as "hereditary friend of the Great King." The reader who knows his Xenophon will surely appreciate that reminder. At 80A, Meno finally explodes; Socrates is like an electric eel; and he is the worst teacher Meno has met. In the same irascible and unreasonable mood, Meno comes up at 80D with his "trick argument," to trap Socrates and justify ending their discussion. ("How can we inquire into something neither of us knows about?"). The myth of reminiscence and the experiment with the Slave Boy mark the beginning of a change. For at 81E-82A, Meno does set a verbal trap when he asks Socrates to "teach me that teaching is impossible." But challenged, he says: "I didn't mean to set a trap; if <u>in any way</u> you can explain, please do." (This reminds us that at 82E and 85D, Meno agrees that Socrates is "not teaching," an argument crucial to my analysis of the <u>logic</u> of the dialogue though it is not important in tracing the dramatic character development.) At 86B, both in matters of immortality and the value of inquiry, Meno is at last persuaded; "somehow, I like what you are saying." At 86C, we find that Meno has not changed entirely; he insists (intemperately, as Socrates points out) in going back to <u>his</u> question (can virtue be taught) rather than Socrates' prior question of what virtue is. This lapse does not show that Meno is indocile, incorrigible, or unimproved; the context still establishes the contrary. The hypothetical dialectic of 87A-90B finds Meno a perfect respondent, polite, intelligent, eager to follow out the reasoning. And after the interlude with Anytus--Meno is friend of his family--at 99E Meno sides with Socrates against Anytus. At 100B, we have Meno's final speech: "That is finely put, Socrates." This is almost word-for-word the final remark of the talented Young Socrates after he has followed the technical dialectic of the Eleatic Stranger in Plato's <u>Statesman</u>.

If wisdom comes in part from removing a false conceit that one knows; if courage reveals itself in willingness to share the rigors of inquiry or

hunt; and if justice shows itself in a fair sharing of chances to ask, criticize, bring in examples; then Meno improves greatly in all three. The improvement is, as we know, temporary; but nevertheless, it is there, woven firmly into the texture of the dialogue. It has to be there, for without it two crucial points would be lost. The first point is the way in which Socrates, unlike either Gorgias or Anytus, leads young men to virtue even though he doesn't "teach" it. The second point is that the temporary change is needed to prove that Plato sees Meno's star-crossed career as a genuine tragedy, not merely the consequence of an inborn vicious nature (which rather seems to be Xenophon's interpretation; and compare Klein's notion of Meno as an archetype of incorrigible amathia).

Now, finally, we return to our contemporary secondary school. I hope we have returned realizing that Plato grasped something of infinite importance to educational theory. This is that neither precept nor example will really teach anything to a student who regards the whole show as a spectator sport, though the one tactic may inform and the other may condition him. I know of no later educational theorist who doesn't concede the point, but I know of very few who don't forget it as soon as they have made the concession. (B. F. Skinner, for example, assumes that his human learners are "motivated," though he cannot guarantee this by water deprivation as he would if they were scholar pigeons.) There is no harm in discussing this Platonic insight with our secondary school class, starting the discussion with what happens in the Meno. Is Socrates just kidding when he says he can't teach? Doesn't he teach the Slave Boy? Does anything in this story show why Anytus thought Socrates was a "bad influence" on young Athenians? How much did Meno learn from his past association with the famous Gorgias? What do you think about the claim that virtue can't be taught, even though perhaps geometry can?

This last question suggests that an entire second round of discussion could center on the modern phrasing of the Meno thesis: that "values cannot be taught." If they could be, surely there would be eager teachers of them; but can we find any institution or person with a skill at making things better, and better able to evaluate things, in the way we can find teachers of geometry or automobile repair? How far, in fact, do admonition, punishment, memorization, or admirable example work as moral educational techniques? Here we might ask a question that Socrates raises but doesn't follow far: is there some mistake in the "model" or "thought picture" that many of us have when we talk about "teaching values?" If, for example, we think of values as jewels in a case; or conditioned responses; or commands given by authorities; how do these models relate to the search for someone who can "teach virtue?" If we can't learn values in school, mightn't we give up that whole attempt, and concentrate on learning facts and skills? (This seems exactly what Gorgias would have recommended to a School Board.)

One advantage of using the Meno to focus discussion of these topics is that it makes it easier to retain distance, generality, and objectivity in the discussion than it would be if we began with modern examples. A third moment would, ideally, be introduced by the students' discovery that Meno actually does learn something. He becomes more polite; wiser (insofar as he is now aware of his own ignorance, and modest about it); more temperate; more willing to go ahead with the argument; willing to side with Socrates against Anytus; and so on. So perhaps the conclusion that seemed to follow from the

argument isn't the whole story. For example, how does that conclusion change if we add the premise that "There exists at least one teacher of virtue" to the argument? What implications does this have for our study of philosophy?

What should be the next question? There are several directions to follow, and for each one other Platonic dialogues that can start off the next conversation.

However it is done, we must move on toward the discussion of a great Socratic discovery: that some values are intrinsic, others instrumental, and most people make their classifications of which is which in exactly the wrong way. And we can add Plato's footnote: this may not be so true of the way people say they value things, but watch what they do.

My present discussion, since I couldn't imitate Stephen Leacock's hero who "jumped on his horse and rode off in all directions at the same time," has had to omit many dimensions, and important ones, that I would have liked to explore. For example, a great deal can be said about the legitimacy and precision of the classical scholarship involved in the reading of Platonic texts. But perhaps an equal importance attaches to the contexts--the metaphysical and religious superstructure which the Meno presupposes. We might invoke the "theory of forms" to justify the use of geometry as a "paradigm case" (even in a strong contemporary sense of "paradigm") of learning. Or we could look more closely at the myth, Socrates account of the "stories told by wise and holy men and also women," to see how much of a role the religious background plays. Another thing I haven't had time to explore is the actual student reaction to this assignment--the digressions, the problem of getting my students to see themselves in the roles of Meno, or the more docile Slave, or other pupils offstage in Plato's drama. Nor have I projected the probable stimulated reaction of some parents when their children tell them they have learned why "values can't be taught" by lectures or punishments! My hope, in this case, would be cold martinis rather than chilled hemlock for a reward, and with luck, further Socratic conversation.

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Plato Workshop

Plato's Republic

(A Study Guide)

The following materials were developed for use in a Plato Workshop for the Summer Institute, "Philosophy and the Humanities in Secondary Education", University of Massachusetts, July 1-21, 1973. The Institute was conducted by the Center for High School Philosophy and funded by the Rockefeller Foundation.

I. Introductory Remarks

A. The 4 Main Fields of Philosophy*

1. Logic
2. Ethics
3. Epistemology
4. Metaphysics

*In addition, there are various areas of study in philosophy which fall under the general scheme "Philosophy of X": e.g. philosophy of history, philosophy of religion, of language, of art (aesthetics), of science, of psychology, of mathematics, etc.

B. Philosophy begins around 600 B.C. in the Hellenistic world.

1. The Pre-Socratics (including Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Anazagoras, Heraclitus, Pythagoras, Parmenides, Zeno)
2. Socrates (479-399 B.C.)
3. Plato (428-348 B.C.), pupil of Socrates
4. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), pupil of Plato

C. Historical Socrates versus the Platonic Socrates (a vehicle for Plato's own thoughts)

D. The Socratic Method - dialectic, or the technique of asking questions.

E. The early dialogues are "definitional dialogues," seeking definitions of terms and concepts by answering questions of the following form: "What is x?" e.g. where the filler for 'x' is 'piety' (in the Euthyphro), 'virtue' (in the Meno), 'justice' (in the Republic). (Plato seems to assume the "definitional thesis," viz. one knows what F is if, and only if, one can provide a satisfactory formal definition of 'F'.)

F. Socrates (both the historical Socrates and the Platonic Socrates) is concerned with the examination of ethical concepts.

II. Topics in the Republic of Contemporary (Philosophical, Social) Interest

A. Equality of Women (Book V, Cha. XV-Cornford, pp. 144-54; Jowett, pp. 138-51)

B. Abolition of the Family and Marriage Regulations (Cornford, pp. 135-74; Jowett, pp. 151-65)

C. On Censorship of Literature for School Use (Cornford, pp. 67-79; Jowett, pp. 61-70)

D. The Three Parts of the Soul (Cornford,pp. 129-38; Jowett, pp.126-32)
suggestion: A comparison of Plato and Freud might here be worthwhile.

E. On Democracy and the Democratic Man (Cornford, pp. 279-86; Jowett, pp. 247-59)
suggestion: One might raise the question whether Plato is correct that democracy (as Plato conceives it) is one of the worst, most degenerate forms of government, or whether what he says is correct in the case of certain countries with a certain socio-economic, cultural background.

F. On Justice (specifically, Cornford, pp. 127-29; Jowett, pp. 121-24)
note: Plato's definition of 'justice' as "doing one's particular work or function," "doing what one is best suited for" makes use of a unified conception of virtue that was natural to him. This unified conception of virtue links virtue (or excellence) with functioning properly (i.e. doing one's job) and with the art or skill that goes with doing one's job properly. A human being, as human being, has a job or function of being a human being and will have virtues or excellences appropriate to that art. We have no such unified concept of virtue today. The idea of virtue as excellence of function survives (e.g. in the idea of a well-integrated personality), but we also naturally think of passive or non-assertive characteristics (e.g. humility, compassion) as virtues.

For Plato, since justice is a peculiarly human essence, then the virtue of a man qua man cannot involve harming other men (and thereby, for Plato, making them less just).

suggestion: One might ask students whether Plato's notion of justice is plausible, and how it competes with our notion of justice as fairness. Is Plato's notion of a just society a totalitarian idea?

G. On Judges (Cornford, pp. 99-102; Jowett, pp. 94-99)

suggestion: One might here suggest a student do a report on a contemporary court case. e.g. the My Lai incident, collect the evidence and present a case for how the judge (as Plato describes the function of a judge) might have ruled in Plato's society. One can emphasize the importance of the Greek notion of virtue or excellence of function, in attempting to get a verdict in the case.

Also, the Euthyphro, Crito and Apology and the death scene from the Phaedo might be used. One could ask the student to compare the trial of some recent political prisoner with the trial of Socrates, examining actual charges against the individuals, prosecution and defense (including the correct and incorrect reasoning involved in arguing either case), actual outcome (and, where different, the "just" outcome).

H. The Allegory of the Cave (Cornford, pp. 227-234; Jowett, pp. 205-09)

I. On Art and the Artist(poet) (Cornford, pp. 321-40; Jowett, pp. 288-303)

note: Plato proposes a copy theory of art. By use of a painter analogy (Cornford, pp. 326; Jowett, p. 292), Plato argues that the artist is like someone holding a mirror, producing mere copies or reflections, resemblences of things in this world. The artist is two stages removed from reality, since, unlike the philosopher king, he doesn't know about the Form, (Reality), e.g. Bedness, and, unlike the carpenter, he doesn't make or reproduce a physical bed. Rather, the artist only produces a copy of the bed, which is itself a copy of Bedness. Thus, for Plato, art is imitation (mimesis).

suggestion: Students might be concerned to ask whether Plato's theory of art is correct. Is the artist a mere imitator? Is some art merely initiative and others art not? If art is, at least in part, imitative, is art "inferior" and "bad" on that ground?

III. A Sketchy Plot Line of the Republic

A. Plato begins by discussing some then current views of justice.

1. Cephalus: justice is telling the truth and paying one's debts. (Plato offers the counterexample of the madman)
2. Polemarchus: justice is rendering every man his due. This account of justice is expanded to mean "harming one's enemies and helping one's friends." Plato then argues that it can never be the virtue or excellence of a human being to harm another human being in the sense of making him less just.
3. Thrasymachus: Justice is doing what is in the interest of the stronger. Plato gets Thrasymachus to make a crucial concession by asking Thrasymachus whether justice is doing what the stronger thinks is in his interest, or what really is in his interest. Opting for the latter alternative, Plato (Socrates) can overturn Thrasymachus' definition: Plato appeals to a hero morality idea, viz. that one is not a ruler (exercising the peculiar excellence of a ruler) when one makes a mistake.

B. Thraysmachus asks, "Is Injustice more profitable than Justice?" In a sense, the rest of the Republic is bent on answering this question. The question gets reasked, and answered, at the end, Cornford, pp. 301-320; Jowett, pp. 274-87.

C. A Threefold Classification of Things that are Good.

1. Intrinsic goods -- desireable in themselves, not for their consequences.
2. Extrinsic goods -- desireable for their consequences only
3. Both intrinsic and extrinsic goods -- desireable in themselves and for their consequences.

Glaucon argues that, if a good at all, justice is at best an extrinsic good. Socrates claims that justice is both an extrinsic and intrinsic good. Gluacon (and Adeimentos') view thus becomes the main target of the remainder of the Republic.

D. Transition from the Individual to the State

1. A discussion of the education of the guardians takes place (Cornford, pp. 66-118; Jowett, pp. 60-118).
2. Use of "the common name assumption" (see other sheet, (B))
3. Use of the "organic assumptions" (other sheet (D))
4. View that the state is the individual writ large.
5. Plato discusses the virtues in the state (Cornford, pp. 119-29; Jowett, pp. 118-24)
6. Plato then argues by analogy, to the virtures of the individual (Cornford, pp. 129-43; Jowett, pp. 124-37).

The four virtues are justice, wisdom, courage and temperance. Wisdom is the virtue of the ruling class, courage is the virtue of the warrior class, temperance is a harmony between classes, justice is everyone's doing what he/she is best suited for. Corresponding to the three classes of the state (the ruling, warrior, and artisan classes), Plato argues that there are three parts of the soul (or individual): the rational part, the spirited part, and the appetitive part.

suggestions: Many, many things can be said or done with these themes. For example, are assumptions (B) and (D) acceptable? Can one argue from the state to its parts? Is there a possibility of committing the "fallacy of division" in so doing? Would we say that the state is just in the same sense or meaning of 'just' as that in which the individual is just? Can one claim successfully that the state is the individual writ large, or is it fallacious (the "fallacy of composition") to so reason? Would a just state or a just individual be one whose parts are functioning harmoniously?

E. Argument for saying the soul has parts (Cornford, pp. 132-7; Jowett, pp. 126-32)

1. Plato establishes that the soul has parts, just as the state has parts, by appeal to the Law of Non-Contradiction (see sheet entitled "Assumptions", (E)).
2. Plato considers a counterexample to the law of non-contradiction: It is contradictory to say that the peg top is both moving and not moving at one and the same time? If it is contradictory, such a statement would amount to saying something inconsistent, meaningless. Plato argues, however, that understood in one way (i.e. when appropriately filled out), such a statement is not meaningless. The top is not moving with respect to its axis, but is moving with respect to some point on its circumference. Thus the proposed counterexample is <u>not</u> a counterexample to the law, since it is not with respect to "the same part of itself" that the top is both moving and not moving.
3. Another case: It is sometimes true that one, say, wants a drink yet doesn't want a drink. How can this be so without being contradictory? Using the peg top case as an example, it must be that it is not "with respect to the same part of oneself" that one wants to drink, on the one hand, and doesn't want to drink, on the other hand. According to Plato, the "soul contains something which urges one to drink and something which holds one back." What urges one is the "irrational appetite," while what restrains one is the reflective rational part. Thus there are at least these two parts of the soul, the appetitive part (or base desires, passions) and the rational part.

4. Plato then gives an argument for the third part of the soul, arguing from the example about Leontius (Cornford, p. 137; Jowett, p. 130). According to Plato, "the point of it surely is that anger is sometimes in conflict with appetite, as if they were two distinct principles". If acceptable, this argument gives the third part of the soul, the spirited part.

suggestions: If one grants Plato the notion of conflicting desires, at least his first argument for the rational and appetitive parts of the soul seems good. It is worth worrying about. Here the comparison with Freud, particularly with regard to Freud's reasons for postulating the existence of the id, ego and super-ego, might be worthwhile. His argument for the third part of the soul seems unsuccessful. One might pose the question, "How could one establish a third part of the soul, following Platonic lines?"

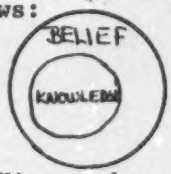
Review: Plato has so far argued for the virtues in the state (wisdom, courage, temperance and justice), the corresponding virtues in the individual, the three classes of the state, and the three parts of the soul. In making the analogy between the individual and the state, Plato has assumed that the state is an organism, and that the excellence or virtues of the state lies in its functioning as an organism. These assumptions are worth getting at if one is interested in the question of whether or not the analogy works.

F. Plato then discusses the position of women in the republic and the uses of war.

1. He seems to distinguish an ethical question, viz. Should women be treated as equals to men? Should women be given the same opportunities as men?, and a factual question, viz. Are women, in fact, equal to men? The answer to the former is "Yes;" the answer to the second is "No," if one is asking whether women are given the same opportunities as men, but seemingly "Yes," if one is asking whether they have the same rights, with no essential difference in their "natures."
2. Although one might accept Plato's conclusion on the equality of women, one must examine his arguments in order to determine whether his arguments for that conclusion are correct. Plato argues by analogy to dogs guarding a flock. Is the analogy plausible?

G. Plato then discusses the mental states knowledge and belief.

1. The modern, natural view of knowledge is that anything one knows one also believes. Plato's view is not this view; he supposes that there is no overlap between what one knows and what one believes. For Plato, all belief is like mere belief. The modern view and Plato's view might be depicted as follows:



Natural View - what one knows one also believes.

Plato's View - what one knows is distinct from what one believes.

2. Plato is led to this view by thinking about whether he can be mistaken. For him, the possibility of being mistaken is enough to show that one does not know something.
3. For Plato's argument, see sheet entitled "Assumptions," (F).
4. Plato supposes that infallibility distinguishes knowledge and belief. This does not mean that we have two faculties, one of which is infallible. Rather, knowledge and belief (as mental states) have different, separate objects. It is here that he begins to discuss the "two worlds view." There are two worlds, the world of appearances and the world of Forms, distinct from each other. In the world of appearances (the spatio-temporal everyday world) we can be mistaken about what we see, claim to know, etc. In the "really real" world of Forms, there is not this possibility of being mistaken. Thus, the objects of belief (i.e. the objects at which belief is directed) are all the objects in our everyday world of appearances, while the objects of knowledge (i.e. the objects which we can be properly said to know) are the Forms. The objects of knowledge and belief are therefore separate. For Plato, knowledge is a mental faculty such that if I know something I cannot be mistaken about it. (See sheet, (F) for a discussion of what this may mean). Plato doesn't allow that we can have knowledge of anything in this world because everything in this world is such that we can be mistaken about it.

H. The Divid Line and the Allegory of the Cave (Cornford, pp. 221-234; Jowett, pp. 199-208)

1. See attached sheet for a pictorial representation of the line and the cave.
2. The Line:
   a. Notice the two worlds: The World of Appearances, The World of Forms the different "states of cognition" or mental faculties:

      Knowledge
      Thinking or Dialectic
      Belief
      Imagining or Imaging

      the different objects corresponding (one-one) to the different mental states or faculties:

      (The Good)- the highest Form
      Forms (given to one through knowledge)
      Mathematical Objects (e.g. triangles)
      Visible Objects (e.g. trees, stones, people)
      Images (Shadows, Reflections)

   b. The line represents the degrees of reality: images are the least real objects in Plato's system; visible, tangible things are more real than images but less real than the mathematical objects of geometricians. Forms are the most real objects, the "really real."
   c. The divided line is a metaphor, and must be translated into literal terms in order to be useful in explaining Plato's "two worlds view." (Perhaps using it in conjunction with discussing the cave allegory will help students grasp what Plato's view is.)

3. The Cave:
   a. See Cornford, p. 231 and Jowett, p. 208 in order to get Plato's explanation and interpretation of this allegory or parable.

suggestion: It might prove to be fun to have the students attempt to say what each feature of the cave is symbolic of in Plato's "two worlds view" before any student has read the section on the cave. For example, what does the fire represent? the shadows? If one assigned a paper on the meaning of interpretation of the cave, expect to get some very interesting and varied responses!

   b. The allegory of the cave and the metaphor of the divided line often are best explained by first discussing one, and then using the information from that discussion to discuss the other.

I. Reasoning in Support of the Theory of Forms: Two Approaches

1. The One-over-many Reasoning (see sheet, assumption (G) and textual uses of the principle: Cornford, pp. 183, 217-8, 325)
   a. The notion is that there is a single form or "real essence" over the multiplicity of many things in this varied world of appearances.
   b. e.g. if a, b, and c are chairs, then the one thing (over and above the three particular things or chairs) which they have in common is the characteristic of being a chair. This characteristic is a universal, not another particular object, and is a quality shared by all three particular chairs. In Plato's terminology, the three particular chairs participate in the Form Chairness, or The Chair Itself -- that characteristic in virtue of which a, b, and c, are each particular chairs.
   c. Thus, corresponding to each of the sets of many things, Plato postulates a single form (Idea) or real essence. There is one Form for each set of many things to which we give the same name. e.g., Corresponding to each of the many beautiful things is the single Form, The Beautiful Itself.

note: Although this is one of the two basic approaches to the Theory of Forms, there are difficulties with it, some difficulties which Plato himself realized and discussed in the dialogue the Parmenides. One problem is that, in addition to "ethically positive" Forms, such as Beauty, Justice, The Good, we get "ethically positive" Forms, such as Chairness, Whiteness, Manness, and "ethically negative" Forms, such as Mudness, Hairness, The Evil. Plato seems, on the contrary not to want or allow such things as Mudness, Hairness as Forms, while, on the other hand, relying on the "one-over-many" principle as reasoning in support of the Theory of Forms. On what grounds does one allow some things as Forms and not others? If Triangularity and Chairness are Forms, which Plato seems to allow, why aren't Hairness, Mudness and Manness? One can speculate, revise Plato, refer to other textual passages in the hopes of finding an answer to these problems, but it is true that Plato himself saw the difficulty and was at a loss to say how to reconcile it.

2. The Incomplete-predicate Reasoning
   a. According to this approach to the Theory of Forms, for some general terms one is unable to find unqualified instances where that term applies. Such terms are "relative terms." Consider the following relative terms: 'equal', 'tall', 'small'. Socrates may be taller than Callius, but he is not unqualifiedly tall; in comparison to someone else Socrates may be quite small.
   b. Plato is worred about relative terms. There are no samples in the world of sense experience of "tall." There is no unqualified instance of 'tall.' Similarily with moral predicates, e.g. 'beautiful'. One needs to fill out the respect in which something is beautiful.
   c. This led Plato to suppose that all things that are tall, or small, or just, or beautiful, are so only qualifiedly, and that one needs to get at the standard in virtue of which these things are said to be tall, or small, or just, or beautiful. This standard of Tallness, or Smallness, or Justice, or the Beautiful.
   d. Thus, it is because Socrates participates in Tallness, and Callius participate in Smallness that it is true that Socrates is taller than Callius.

J. Plato then continues to discuss the higher education process for the philosopher king.

K. The Decline of Society and of the Soul:

1. Plato discusses the fall of the Ideal State (i.e. the republic).

2. He gives an account of the best and worst forms of government discussing the not-so-good and not-so-bad forms that fall between them. From best to worst, in that ordering, Plato gives the following:

Form of Government	(Corresponding) Type of Personality
Aristocracy (rule of the wise)	
Timocracy	The Timocratic person
Oligarchy	The Oligarchic person
Democracy	The Democratic person
Despotism (Tyranny)	The Despotic person

3. See Cornford, pp. 265-300 and Jowett, pp. 234-274 for a discussion of the above.

L. Is injustice more profitable than justice?

1. Here Plato returns to the question asked by Thrasymachus in Book I, and to the claim made by Glaucon that justice is at best an extrinsic good. Plato compares the just and unjust lives in respect of happiness, attempting to show that only the just man is the happy man. Plato's aim is to establish two theses:
   i. Justice is more profitable than injustice
   ii. Justice is both an extrinsic and an intrinsic good.

2. The just and unjust lives are compared, and Plato discusses the notion of "living well."

M. Plato's Theory of Art as Imitation

1. See section II, I of this handout for a brief discussion of Plato's copy theory of art.

2. Plato has two basic indictments of the poet or artist:
   a. The poet appeals to the appetitive part of the soul, not to reason. He/she encourages the use of the emotions, not reason. The artist is a sort of undermiaer of the aims of the philosopher and the rational state.
   b. The poets creations are at least twice removed from the standard, the Forms. The painter needs only know how things look, not how they are (with regard to physical objects) or how they really are (with regard to Forms). Thus the work of the artist is inferior to that of the carpenter.

3 Kinds of Objects	Creator	The Object's Degree of Reality
Bedness (A Form)	God	The really real
A physical object, a bed	a carpenter	once removed from reality*
A painting of a bed	the artist	twice removed from reality

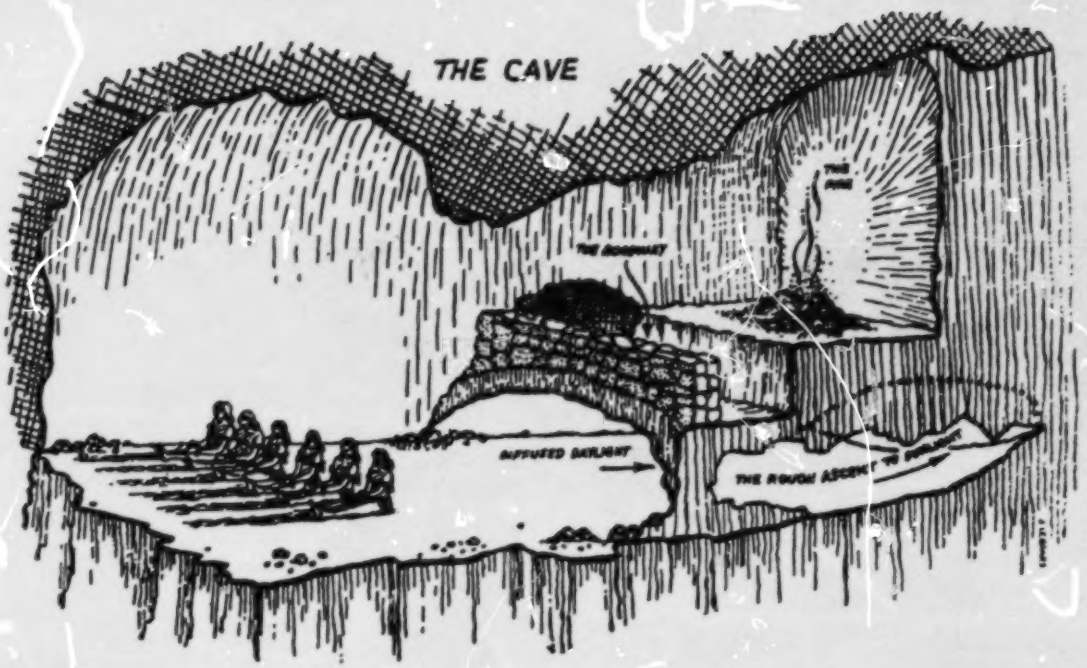
*If one includes "mathematical objects" in this list, then the mathematical objects are once-removed from reality, the physical objects are twice-removed, and the painted object is thrice-removed from reality.

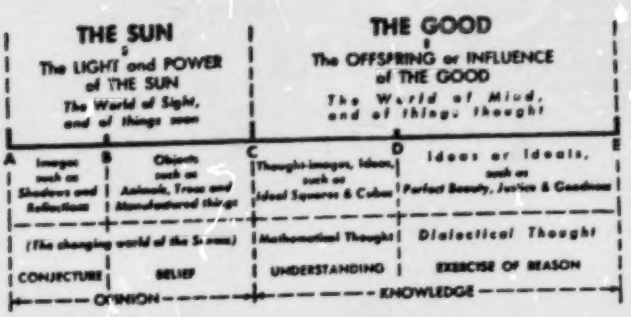
suggestions: In addition to those suggestions offered at II, I, one might consider whether it is true that the artist or poet needn't know anything about the construction of a bed in order to paint it, or the anatomy of a human being in order to paint one. Further, it is appropriate for Plato to lump the arts together and get a theory which suppoedly applies to all the arts? Also, can Plato's theory accommodate the different styles and periods of art, such as realistic still life, impressionistic paintings and abstract art?

N. Plato ends the Republic with a discussion of the immortality of the soul and the rewards of justice.

1. According to Plato, the indestructible soul reaps the consquences of its deeds, whether good or bad. He describes the fate of the soul in the imagery of myth, the Myth of Er. (See Cornford, pp. 349-359, Jowett, pp. 307-316.)

2. According to Plato, in human life there is an element of free choice in addition to the elements of necessity and chance. It is the element of free choice which makes us responsible for our actions.





LENGTH REPRESENTS DEGREE OF CLEARNESS, NOT SIZE OF CLASS.

Mathematics $\frac{CE}{AE} = \frac{DE}{CD} = \frac{BC}{AB}$. It follows that BC = CD.

THE DIVIDED LINE

Assumptions

(A) The Definitional Thesis:
One knows what F is if, and only if, one can provide a satisfactory, formal definition of 'F'.
note: This assumption appears throughout Plato's earlier dialogues, the so-called "definitional dialogues."

(B) The Common Name Assumption:
If two things are called by the same name, they are alike in the respect to which the common name applies.
note: Plato appeals to(B) in arguing by analogy from the state ("the individual writ large") to the individual (see Cornford, Cha. XIII, p. 131; Jowett, Book IV, pp. 131-2).
Q.: Is Plato's argument from the state to the individual, based on (B), acceptable? Could the state be just and the individual just but in different senses of 'just'? Could there be a shift in meaning or senses when 'just' is being used to apply to the state and to the individuals?

(C) It is easier to make out the nature of justice in the individual if one studies it first in something larger.
note: The acceptability of (C) may rest on the acceptability of (B). For mention of (C), see Cornford, p. 130; Jowett, pp. 124-5, 52.

(D) The Organic Assumptions:
1) The state is an organism, not just a collection of people. It has a functional unity, just as the individual is an organism with a functional unity.
2) The excellence or virtue of a state lies in its functioning as an organism, just as the excellence or virtue of the individual lies in its functioning as an organism.
note: Plato appeals to both theses in (D) when discussing the virtues in the state (Cornford, pp. 119-129; Jowett, pp. 108-123).

(E) The Law of Non-Contradiction:
Nothing is, at the same time, in relation to the same object, and in respect to the same part of itself, both F and not F.
note: Plato appeals to this law in presenting his argument for saying that the soul has parts (Cornford, pp. 132-7; Jowett, pp. 126-132). Plato presents the example of the spinning peg to show that, with respect to its axis, the peg is not moving, but with respect to some point on its circumference, it is moving although the peg may be said to be moving and not-moving, the Law of Non-Contradiction is not violated.
Q.: Is it correct to say human beings have conflicting desires? If one grants Plato the notion of conflicting desires, he does have a plausible argument for at least two parts of the soul, the reasoning and appetitive parts. (One might want to discuss the similarities and differences between Plato and Freud here.)

(F) The K-principle:
K) If A really knows that p, then it cannot be the case that A is mistaken about whether p.
K1) It is not possible both that A really knows that p and A is mis-

taken about whether p.

K2) If p is something A really knows, then p is something A cannot be mistaken about.

notes: In discussing knowledge, belief and the "two worlds" doctrine, Plato seems to appeal to K in order to convince us that we do not really know anything (in "this world"). His argument is, roughly, something like the following:

Suppose:	1.	A really knows that p.
	2.	K, viz. If A really knows that p, then it cannot be the case that A is mistaken about whether p.
Then:	3.	It cannot be the case that A is mistaken about whether p. (By Modus Ponens on lines 1 and 2)
But:	4.	It is always possible that A can be mistaken about p. (i.e. not-3, or asserting that 3 is false)
Thus:	5.	A really does not know that p.

The strategy of the above reductio ad absurdum, like all reductio ad absurdum's, is the following:

To prove:	p
Suppose:	not-p
Then:	From the supposition not-p, derive a contradiction.
Since:	not-p led to a contradiction
Conclude:	p

The problem with K, a principle often appealed to in arguments for scepticism, is that it is ambiguous. K may mean K1, or K may mean K2. It looks like K2 is Plato's better bet: If K means K1, Plato's argument for the (desired) conclusion that knowledge is infallible doesn't get started. On the other hand, if K means K2, we have a very strong condition on knowledge, and it is fair to ask whether, if K2 is true, anyone has knowledge. Is scepticism the only acceptable view? (For text references, see Cornford, pp. 175-93; Jowett, pp. 168-173.)

(G) "The One Over Any Principle" or "OM":
Whenever several things, a, b, c, etc., are properly called 'F', there is some one thing, F-ness, in virtue of which a, b, c, etc. are properly called 'F'.

notes: Plato appeals to the "one over many principle" as one line of reasoning in support of the Theory of Forms. (The other line of reasoning is the so-called "incomplete-predicate" reasoning.) It is a very important assumption, one which is still being discussed today. According to (G), there is a single Form or "essence" over the multiplicity of things in this spatial-temporal universe. The Form F-ness is the Idea or universal which several particular things called 'F' share in common. It is the participation of two pieces of white chalk in the Form Whiteness which, according to Plato, makes both pieces white. Plato extends this line of reasoning to moral predicates also, such as 'just' and 'good': All things that are just are just because they participate in the characteristic or Form, the standard Justice itself.